

# Target Market

In the mid-1990s, the National Commission Against Drunk Driving held six public hearings and three national conferences focusing on 21-to-34-year-old individuals <http://www.ncadd.com/tsra/abstracts/young.adults.html>. They found that 21-to-34 year old drinking drivers:

- ▶ comprise about half of all drunk drivers involved in alcohol-related fatal crashes;
- ▶ are responsible for more alcohol-related fatal crashes than any other age group;
- ▶ are more likely than any other age group to have been intoxicated at the time of the crash;
- ▶ have the highest blood alcohol concentrations in fatal crashes;
- ▶ are about twice as likely as other drivers to have experienced a prior crash;
- ▶ are four times more likely to have had their licenses suspended or revoked; and
- ▶ are the most resistant to changing their drinking and driving behavior.

## Who Are These Guys?

In 2000, the University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation conducted 11 focus groups with 21-to-34-year-old single men who said they had driven after excessive drinking. Another seven focus groups were held with expert observers of the target; they included law enforcement personnel, educators, employers, government policy makers, health and social service counselors, friends and family of the target market, alcohol beverage retailers, bar owners, bartenders and wait staff. The goal of these focus groups was to learn more about the target in terms of their values, lifestyles and interests.

The focus group findings indicated that the most likely person to drive after excessive drinking is a 21-to-34-year-old single male, working in a blue-collar job, with a high school education or less, who most often drinks beer. He also:

- ▶ drinks heavily with friends in bars
- ▶ feels safe drinking eight to 12 drinks and then driving
- ▶ often “assigns” the least drunk person to be the designated driver
- ▶ socializes with groups of friends and needs to fit in
- ▶ values masculinity
- ▶ feels immortal

### WHO DOESN'T GET BEHIND THE WHEEL

There are plenty of guys who don't drive when they shouldn't. The fear of getting a citation, getting in a crash or affecting their job outweighs the benefits of driving themselves home. They are generally seen as more mature individuals with a stronger support system of family and friends.



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He drinks:

- ▶ to socialize
- ▶ to overcome inhibitions
- ▶ to increase his confidence
- ▶ to have a good time
- ▶ to get away from the hassles of daily life
- ▶ to overcome inhibitions and develop a different and more exciting personality

His car is important because:

- ▶ it gives him a feeling of control
- ▶ it keeps the option open of taking a woman home
- ▶ it enhances his identity

These single young men like good times, women, sports, their vehicles and activities where alcohol is one part of the action. He drives after drinking excessively:

- ▶ to get home
- ▶ because he feels fearless and invincible
- ▶ because he is unaware that his driving skills are impaired
- ▶ because there is social pressure to be like everybody else and to fit in
- ▶ to relax and have a good time by cranking up music and driving fast
- ▶ because he perceives that there is no other way to get home without a lot of hassle
- ▶ because he is afraid that some other drunk will crash into his car if it is left behind
- ▶ because the perceived risks of actually getting caught or crashing are low

In the mind of the target, disadvantages of driving after excessive drinking are many. His fears include:

- ▶
- ▶ hurting himself or someone else
- ▶ receiving an OWI citation
- ▶ losing driving privileges
- ▶ losing insurance
- ▶ losing a job
- ▶ embarrassment and loss of respect



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This clear picture of the target market that emerged from these discussions was quite useful in the demonstration project. It can help you consider what behavior you are trying to change, what unique benefits your program can offer to them, what barriers need to be overcome, and what weaknesses exist in the perception of driving home drunk. These issues need to be strongly considered when evaluating ideas for the development of your community's ride service.

